

SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY
FRENCH CERAMIC ART



THE METROPOLITAN MUSEUM OF ART

SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY
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AND DECORATIVE ARTS

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On the cover: *Sconce: Page holding a torch socket*. Probably
Normandy, ca. 1660–80 or later; model ca. 1610,
Fontainebleau

FOREWORD

The Museum entered the field of collecting French Renaissance and post-Renaissance ceramics in 1884 with some important purchases from the celebrated collection of Sir Andrew Fountaine. However, more than ninety percent of the accessions that followed were either given or bequeathed. The vast collections of J. Pierpont Morgan, given to the Museum in 1917, included the private collection of Gaston Le Breton, a leading nineteenth-century historian of French ceramic art and former director of the Musée Céramique of the city of Rouen. Among other individuals who have contributed entire collections to the Museum are R. Thornton Wilson, who had a passion for single objects of outstanding beauty and rarity, and Julia A. Berwind, who collected broadly in certain categories. The most recent addition to the collection is a pair of monumental Nevers ewers purchased with the aid of the Sampson Fund, given in memory of Charles E. Sampson specifically for acquiring rare examples of fine European ceramics. To these and other donors the Museum is indebted for the formation of an interesting range of works representing the progress of French ceramic art in the seventeenth century. This second volume in the series of handbooks focusing on particular aspects of the collections of the Department of European Sculpture and Decorative Arts sets this part of the collection within its historical and aesthetic perspectives.

Philippe de Montebello, Director
The Metropolitan Museum of Art



1. "Gondola" cup with figure personifying a spring.
Fontainebleau, ca. 1620–25; model ca. 1600–1610
probably by Guillaume Dupré

SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY FRENCH CERAMIC ART

The reign of Henry IV, or rather the years of his effective rule (1598 to 1610), inaugurated France's splendid century, its *grand siècle*. This period saw the end, at least temporarily, of fifty years of tension between Protestants and Catholics, which time and again had broken out into inconclusive civil war and which had left France exhausted, impoverished, and disrupted. The Protestant king converted to Catholicism and the Catholic party accepted the terms of the Edict of Nantes (1598). Protestants were to enjoy equality with Catholics in all civil matters and were guaranteed important religious rights while Catholicism remained the established religion of the state. Henry was committed to these terms, and he had many Protestants in his administration, including Sully, the powerful minister of finance. The king's aims were to secure justice for all and to restore his country's prosperity. He was an avid builder, and in the tradition of his predecessors, the Valois, he also patronized the arts. His example was followed by his son Louis XIII, by his grandson Louis XIV, and by the regencies that governed France during the minorities of these two monarchs.

Royal patronage of the arts in the seventeenth century took the form of personal interest and involvement. The crown was the foremost client giving architects commissions for official buildings of all kinds as well as for royal residences, churches, and religious houses. Entire workshops, such as those for tapestry at Fontainebleau and in Paris and the comprehensive Gobelins workshops later in the century, were organized to provide furnishings for these royal buildings. Individual artists active in many disciplines had studios in the Louvre, the Tuileries, and other palaces and received a yearly *pension*, or allowance. The crown also awarded *privilèges* — monopolies similar to modern patent rights — to new ventures. Art became intimately connected with the nation's prestige and economy. Gradually a level of excellence in the arts was achieved that included refinement of materials, exactitude of workmanship, clarity of expression, and advanced taste in design, while asserting specifically French sensibilities and concerns. Even pottery was touched by this new standard.

At the beginning of the century French pottery was neither refined nor contemporary enough in design to be counted among the arts. Fine wares were imported and vied for French markets — Italian majolica from Savona and Faenza, German stoneware from the Rhineland, and Chinese porcelain brought in by Portuguese merchants from Lisbon and Antwerp. Lead-glazed earthenwares for table, kitchen, and dairy use were made of local clays for local markets, but the paucity of surviving examples has hampered their study. These earthenwares were in the sturdy medieval pottery tradition; new techniques, styles, and subject matter, which were introduced into France, at first in a very restricted way at court, in the sixteenth century, enjoyed a separate development as the seventeenth century progressed.

SCHOOL OF PALISSY

At the beginning of the century a pottery in the Palace of Fontainebleau showed a unique response to the stylistic changes in French art traceable to the introduction of Italian Renaissance art at the court of Francis I. This workshop was probably under the leadership of Jean Chipault II, *émailleur sur terre*, who had succeeded his father Jean Chipault I (working 1576–99) as *émailleur du roi* in 1599. His yearly *pension* of ten livres in 1599 grew to thirty livres in 1611, the year of his death. Jean Chipault I was a goldsmith and, like Bernard Palissy (ca. 1510–90), the great ceramic innovator of the sixteenth century, was a Protestant from the Saintonge, a district with a long ceramic history. Possibly through these connections, or as a colleague in Paris, the elder Chipault gained a working knowledge of Palissy's closely guarded inventions: a white clay body; brightly colored lead glazes applied like so many enamels; the mottling of several colors together; and the molding of small reptiles, fish, and plants in clay from plaster negatives. Plaster molds were also used to make ornamental wares called *terres sigillées* which had pictorial decoration in low relief like the *terra sigillata* of Roman times.

Sometime after the assassination of Henry IV in 1610, the pottery moved to a house just outside the main courtyard of Fontainebleau belonging to Claude Bertélemy (ca. 1555–1626), Jean Chipault I's son-in-law. He was evidently prosperous; a 1620 inventory of his house and workshop lists figures, dishes, basins, candlesticks, openwork bowls, vases, urns, ewers, salts, cups, bottles, and even picture frames. Some of these were enameled *terres sigillées* and some were *jaspées* or *agatées* (that is, decorated with mottled or marbled glazes). "Rustic" wares — dishes with reptiles and plants in the manner of Palissy — were also made by Claude Bertélemy.

Produced in a workshop under royal protection, the Fontainebleau wares naturally reflected court art and furnishings (see cover illustration). The *terres sigillées* had raised pictorial decoration of mythological (figs. 1 and 2), religious, and genre subjects. Royal portraits, both historical and allegorical (fig. 3), were no doubt commissioned, and the art found in the palace itself also provided direct inspiration (fig. 4). For candlesticks and other vertical pieces, motifs were borrowed from the vocabulary of French Renaissance architecture. Less numerous types are figures such as a nurse (fig. 5), a bagpiper, a shepherd, and wild and domestic animals which reveal the courtly vogue for pastoral allegory.

The anonymous authors of the Fontainebleau figures and relief compositions — some 150 designs are known — must have been court artists accomplished in sculpture and medallic art. Wax originals would have been supplied from which to make plaster molds for the ceramic versions. Guillaume Dupré (1579–1640), *sculpteur du roi* and leading medalist of the time, is traditionally believed to have modeled the group of a baby and its nurse (fig. 5). In any event he must have provided wax models for *terres sigillées*; his medallic style can be identified on a dish in the Museum's collection, molded with Diana and Actaeon.

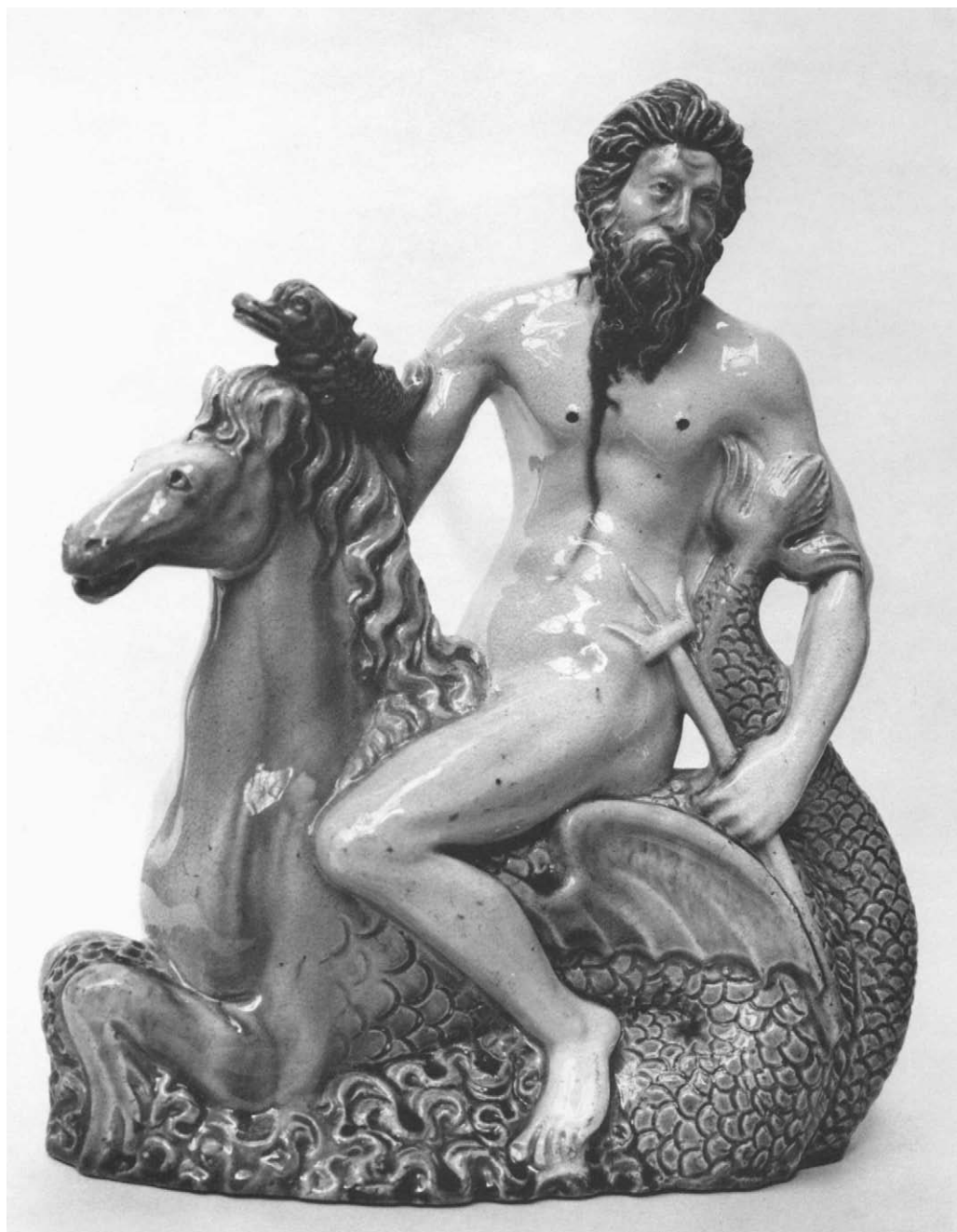
The incorporation of court taste in plastic art was not the only feature that set the school of Palissy wares apart from traditional pottery. The ceramic material itself was of unusual composition — a mixture of white clay and an exceptionally high proportion of silica (ground sand). This produced a white body, which was unsuitable for throwing on the wheel but received molded impressions well. Its



2. Dish: *Andromeda rescued by Perseus*. Probably Normandy, late seventeenth century; model ca. 1600, Fontainebleau, possibly by Giovanni Paolo

whiteness acted as a foil to subtle hues of blue, turquoise, green, purple, yellow, orange, and brown lead glazes; this brilliant variety of painterly colors developed by Palissy would not have shown up against ordinary brown potter's clay.

Descendants and relations of Jean Chipault I, all Protestants, continued to make these "school of Palissy" wares at Fontainebleau into the 1660s, adding new subjects and adapting old ones. There is evidence of collaboration of some kind in nearby Avon with Antoine Clérissy, a glassmaker and faïencier, from the late 1630s to 1650. Later at Manerbe, near Lisieux in Normandy, there was a continuation of production but at a less proficient standard. The dispersal away from Fontainebleau may indicate the difficulties Protestants experienced from officialdom in the second part of the century.



3. Henry IV as Neptune with an infant dolphin.
Fontainebleau, ca. 1601–1602



4. Dish: *Diana and the stag*. Fontainebleau,
ca. 1620–25; model ca. 1610



5. *Nurse with baby in swaddling bands*. Manerbe, ca. 1670; model ca. 1602–1605, Fontainebleau, possibly by Guillaume Dupré

FAIENCE

French faience was derived from Italian majolica, introduced into France in the early sixteenth century. The majolica potters veiled the natural brownish color of their clay with a lead glaze containing a high proportion of tin oxide which produced an opaque white glaze, or *bianco*. Fired pottery vessels were coated with this glaze, painted with metal oxides, given a coat of clear glaze (the *coperta*), and fired again. In the process of firing, the glassy elements in the glaze, incorporating the fine tin ash, fused and on cooling presented a shiny white surface called “tin enamel” or “tin glaze.” The painted polychrome decoration, applied as stains derived from oxides of copper, manganese, cobalt, antimony, and iron, sank into the glaze and was indelibly retained, while the *coperta* gave the colors an added brilliance. This technique, called “*grand feu*,” was a potter’s secret that became known very gradually in France. French potters, however, omitted the *coperta*.



6. Pharmacy jar for a drug in liquid form (cover missing). Montpellier, ca. 1600

By the early seventeenth century, in Paris, Orléans, Marseilles, Nîmes, Montpellier, Lyons, Le Croisic, Nantes, and Roanne, French potters as well as descendants of migrant Italians made *faïence blanche* (white majolica) with sparse blue decoration in the manner of the widely exported *bianchi di Faenza* (hence the French word “*faïence*”). For a short period in Lyons and Montpellier (fig. 6), polychrome faience was made in continuation of sixteenth-century Italian work from Urbino and Faenza.

NEVERS

In Nevers a new faience industry took root under the leadership of an outstanding patron. In 1565 Louis Gonzaga (1539–95), governor of Piedmont and brother of the duke of Mantua, married Henriette de Clèves, the wealthiest woman of her day and heir to the duchy of Nevers. In 1566 Gonzaga became duke of Nevers with its capital, Nevers, on the Loire and a considerable territory. Gonzaga was an outstanding humanist, and he and his son Charles (duke 1595–1637) used their wealth to make Nevers a seat of intellectual and artistic life. Faience, glassmaking, and enameling were introduced there. For more than fifty years Nevers was the only French center making an advanced type of blue-and-white and polychrome faience. In Paris the dukes of Nevers occupied one of the largest and architecturally most innovative houses on the riverbank opposite the Louvre, furnished no doubt with faience and other products of the duchy.

Extensive clay deposits suitable for faience were discovered outside Nevers and were exploited from about 1578. Wares of Italian type were made by Dominique, Augustin, and Jean-Baptiste Conrade, potters originally from Albissola in Italy, in partnership with Julio Gambin of Faenza who had been active at Lyons. At first their work was patronized locally with important commissions from the Gonzaga such as that for the painted faience pavements of the château of La Gloriette, built in 1590. In 1603 the Conrade brothers received a monopoly from Henry IV to make both white and polychrome faience. The monopoly protected them from competition within the duchy for a period of thirty years, and their products could be sold in Paris and throughout the kingdom. The patronage of the Gonzaga with their court connections gave an entrée for Nevers faience in Paris and offset the tendency to retardation in adopting new patterns that distance from the capital normally caused.

Polychrome wares, called *istoriato* (narrative) after their sixteenth-century Italian models, were made in the workshop of Augustin Conrade, probably with Julio Gambin in charge of the painting. For these, Italian and Flemish engravings were re-created on faience through the medium of *poncis* (drawings based on engravings, with pinholes following the main outlines of the composition). The *poncis* was laid over the unfired *bianco* and a dusting of charcoal through the holes gave the painters a sure guide. The compositions, based on engravings, usually represented mythological and biblical stories (fig. 7) or scenes from contemporary court life such as hunts. This type of ceramic decoration, perfected at Urbino in the 1530s, was apparently long in demand in Paris and among Italians in the entourage of the Gonzaga and later Italian governors of Nevers. *Istoriato* decoration was not totally supplanted by newer designs; vases in this style dated 1618, 1644, and 1655 are known.

Also borrowed from Italian majolica, again from Urbino, were ornamental designs called “grotesques.” They had their origin in the phantasmagoric figures painted on the white plaster walls in the excavations (grottoes) of Nero’s Golden House in Rome. A small plate in the Museum’s collection inscribed “May 1644” has figures in late sixteenth-century dress surrounded by a border of grotesques (fig. 8).

Jean-Baptiste Conrade was the maker of white wares and of large, well-modeled religious figures of unknown authorship. He was designated both *sculpteur en terre de faïence* and *pottier en terre blanche* — white wares were a necessary part of day-to-day



7. *Plate*. Probably Nevers, ca. 1600–1620



8. *Plate*. Nevers, inscribed underneath "May 1644"



9. Bowl. Nevers, ca. 1630–40

production. Faïence painted in blue with touches of yellow was also made, often in interesting shapes (fig. 9).

The Ostrich and the Ecce Homo potteries were opened after 1633 when the Conrade monopoly ran out, but the family retained the royal connection for another eighteen years; in 1634 Dominique's son Antoine obtained the title *faïencier de la maison du roi* which was inherited by his son Dominique in 1648; however, in 1651, when this Dominique visited Italy, a Jean Valhean secured the new title *noble faïencier du roi*.



10. Dish with the arms of Poirer de Granval. Nevers,
ca. 1650



11. *Plate with the arms of the Aligre family. Rouen, ca. 1650–60*



12. *Ewer and plate. Nevers, ca. 1650–70*

Early in the seventeenth century the Nevers potters adopted Chinese vase shapes, anticipating borrowings from oriental sources in Holland later in the century. Sources for decorative scenes were found in French prints, especially book illustrations, in addition to the Italian works that had been preferred earlier. *L'Astrée* (1607–1627), a long allegorical romance by Honoré d'Urfé (1568–1625) which was dedicated to Henry IV, was influential, and the illustrations by Daniel Rabel (1578–1637) were adapted for use on faience in Nevers and indeed later in Rouen (figs. 10 and 11).

Faience with a *bianco* stained mustard yellow throughout its whole body and another stained deep blue are unique to Nevers. The blue was quite correctly called *bleu persan*, for such blue grounds were first used on tiles and dishes in Persian pottery. Original effects were produced by painting over these grounds in white, yellow, orange, and brown enamels with bird and flower patterns in imitation of Isnik



13. *Pilgrim bottle*. Nevers, ca. 1660–80



14. *Ewer*. Nevers, ca. 1675–85

pottery, known in France through imports from Rhodes (fig. 12). Turkish shapes such as finger vases were also made, and other oriental designs began to be popular (fig. 13).

In the second half of the seventeenth century the court taste for immense ceremonial furnishings was echoed by very large faience from Nevers. Many of these were modeled on the strongly sculptural vases, urns, basins, and ewers created for royal palaces, such as the great bronze pieces designed for Versailles by the royal



15. *Pilgrim flask*. Nevers, ca. 1675–85

goldsmith Claude Ballin I (ca. 1615–78). Sources for their painted decoration were engravings by Laurent de La Hyre (1606–1656), François Chauveau (1613–76), and others after the work of court painters such as Simon Vouet and Charles Lebrun. Large pieces were often strongly colored in purple, blue, green, and yellow with heavy brownish-purple outlines (fig. 14). Others showed a more delicate application of the same palette in fine, thready outlines, presenting a harmonious matte polychromy that is Nevers's most characteristic coloring (fig. 15).

ROUEN

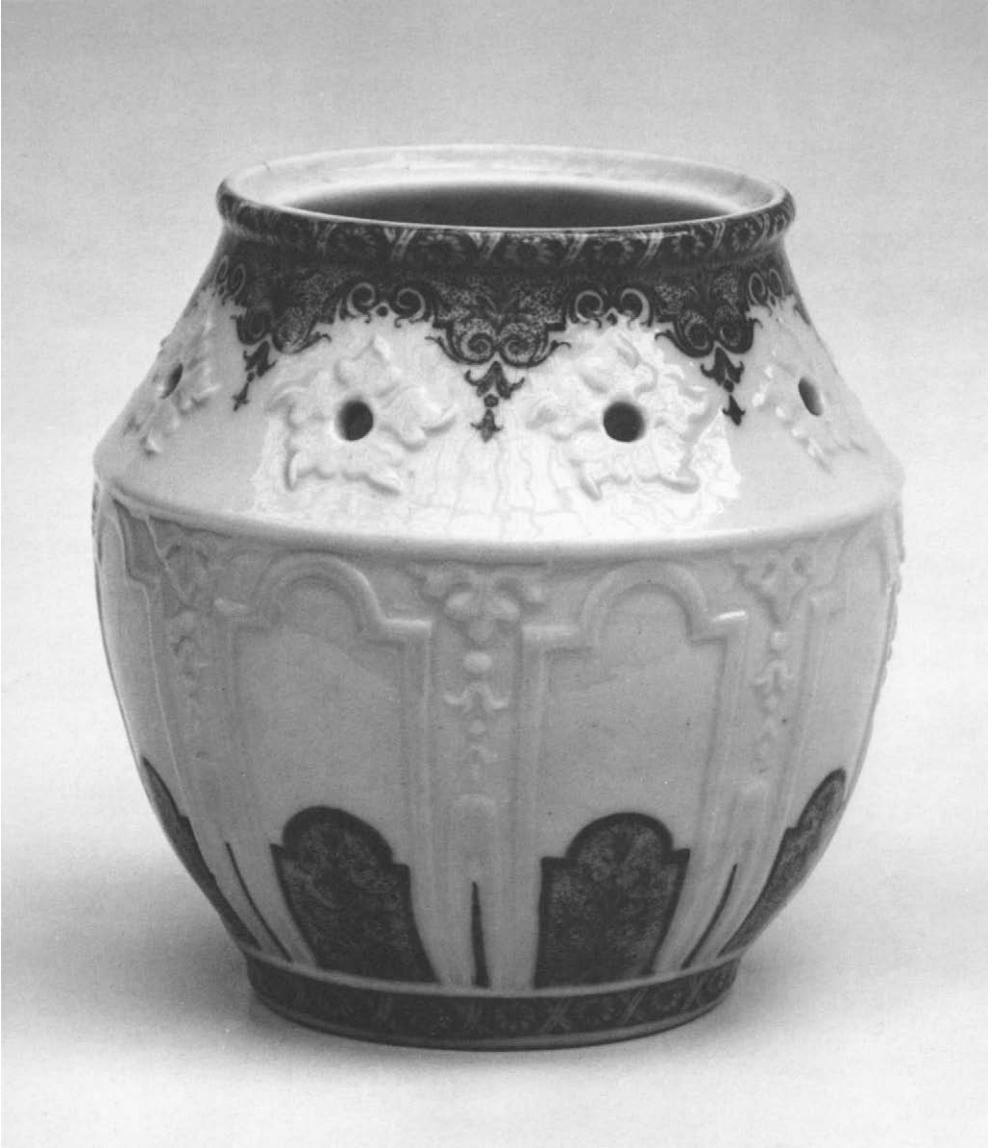
In 1647 painters from Nevers joined potters from Normandy and Holland to provide the skilled technical help needed to launch a new faience pottery in Rouen. This was undertaken by Edmé Poterat (1612–87) under a fifty-year monopoly obtained by Nicolas Poirel, sieur de Granval, to make faience in Normandy. Three early pieces, inscribed “*faict a Rouen 1647*,” are decorated sparsely in blue with touches of yellow and green. The wares of the early decades of Rouen production (fig. 11) are presumed to be similar to the simpler Nevers and Dutch wares. After working in Rouen, Joachim Vattier returned to Pré d’Auge, a pottery village near Manerbe, where he made distinctive tiles and religious figures in faience.

In 1670 Louis XIV built the small Trianon de Porcelaine in the grounds of Versailles. For this first official essay in chinoiserie, tiles, vases, and tubs were ordered from Edmé Poterat in Rouen, Joachim Vattier in Pré d’Auge, Pierre Chicaneau at Saint-Cloud, and at least one pottery in Nevers and also from Delft. The fact that no orders were given to the many faïenciers in the Faubourg Saint-Antoine in Paris appears to indicate the utilitarian nature of the Paris wares at that time. The king also ordered large faience tubs for the Orangerie at Fontainebleau, tiles for the library floor at Versailles, and stoves, tubs, vases, and tiles for Marly. It is clear from these royal orders that, although appreciated, faience was regarded as decorative furnishing — tiled floors must have given a dazzling appearance to a room — and had not yet supplanted silver as the preferred material for elegant table equipment.

The Rouen factory was evidently busy, most likely producing blue-and-white wares similar to those of Nevers. Gaining wealth and prestige, Edmé Poterat bought the monopoly owned by Nicolas Poirel in 1674. His social position reflected this. He became sieur de Saint-Etienne and in 1685 seigneur d’Emendreville. On his death in 1687 he was described as “*grand maître des faïenceries royales de Rouen*.” He left his business to his younger son, Michel; his older son, Louis, set up a factory near his father’s in 1673, where he made faience and, in strict secrecy, an artificial porcelain (fig. 16), that is, a porcelain not made by the same methods or with the same ingredients as Chinese porcelain. In 1696 Louis Poterat died “crippled in his limbs by the ingredients used in his porcelain,” leaving his business to his son Louis II.

The same year, 1696, Nicolas Massolay, no doubt inspired by the porcelain success of Louis Poterat, started to make an imitation porcelain from opaque white glass at Eauplet near Rouen. Massolay’s enterprise continued until 1739.

When the Poterat monopoly expired in 1697, a number of new potteries were opened, making both blue-and-white faience and *bruns de Rouen*. The latter were brown wares with only the top side tin-enameled and painted in blue. This type was also made in Paris and in Saint-Omer and other towns in the region of Calais.



16. *Jar for potpourri (cover missing). Rouen, ca. 1690*

SAINT-CLOUD

Rouen was indirectly the cradle of the Saint-Cloud faience factory established just outside Paris in 1664. François Réverend, the proprietor of the Saint-Cloud factory, lived in Rouen between 1648 and 1653 as buyer for the royal grain reserves of Brittany and Normandy. Pierre Chicaneau, the principal painter at Saint-Cloud, is thought to have worked for the Poterat in Rouen at some earlier time. His family claimed that he made porcelain before 1673.

The factory at Saint-Cloud was under the protection of the king's brother, the duc d'Orléans, and was near his château on the banks of the Seine. It had a monopoly to make faience in Paris or its suburbs. In 1678 Barbe Coudray, Pierre Chicaneau's widow, married Henri Trou from Nevers. In 1683 they bought the monopoly from François Réverend.

By 1692 a guide to Paris cited the Saint-Cloud factory as one that made bespoke garden vases. Another declared "there is at Saint-Cloud a faience factory where one can have articles made as one wishes" (fig. 17). The Chicaneau family claimed that porcelain "as fine as the Chinese" was made at Saint-Cloud from 1693. Jean-Baptiste Chicaneau set up as a *marchand-faiencier* in Paris in 1696. On the death of Henri Trou in 1700, an inventory was made of the factory's stock; there were forty-five hundred pieces including sets of vases for chimneypieces, water pots, plates, dishes, covered broth bowls, and chamber pots. Saint-Cloud has not been recognized for the distinction of its seventeenth-century faience, apart from pharmacy jars; its eminence dates from its production of porcelain, noted for originality in both paste and decoration. A monopoly for the production of porcelain at Saint-Cloud was obtained in 1702, and in 1706 Jean Chicaneau set up as a porcelain manufacturer in Paris, no doubt using the improved formulas from Saint-Cloud.



17. Tile (from the tile cladding of a stove). Saint-Cloud
or Paris, ca. 1705

SOUTHERN FRANCE

There were two important faience potteries in the South of France. These produced wares for the southern markets, principally Marseilles. This ancient city had grown rich from its nomination in 1664 as port of entry for the merchantmen of the *Compagnie des Indes* in the China trade, and its population had grown with the enlarging of docks and arsenals for the galleys that protected French navigation from pirates and other unfriendly shipping in the Mediterranean.

The first of these faience potteries was established at Moustiers-Sainte-Marie, an almost inaccessible village high in the Basses Alpes on a mountainside almost sixty miles from the Mediterranean coast. Clay, fuel, and water were in plentiful supply. The Clérissy family — probably kinsmen of the Antoine Clérissy who was active in Paris and Fontainebleau in the first half of the seventeenth century — were potters there from 1620. In 1677 Pierre Clérissy (1651–1728) opened a faience pottery and engaged the artist François Viry from nearby Riez to take charge of the painting workshop. The faience went to Beaucaire, an important commercial city on the Rhone, from which it could be sent north to Lyons and central France



18. *Ewer*. Moustiers, ca. 1690–1700



19. Dish: *An ostrich hunt*. Moustiers, ca. 1690

and south to Marseilles and places abroad. Pierre Clérissy's brother Joseph (1644–85), in association with craftsmen from Nevers, opened a faïence pottery in 1679 at Saint-Jean-du-Désert, an isolated village outside Marseilles. Contacts between the two potteries were not close despite the Clérissy family connection and the fact that members of the Viry family painted in both.

The faïence of Moustiers is unique for its luminous fine white enamel and for the energy and freedom of much of its blue painting (fig. 18). The latter was often carried out directly on the enamel without a guiding outline having been laid in first.



20. Tray. Moustiers, ca. 1700–1710

Hunting scenes after Tempesta (fig. 19) were a mainstay of decoration, as were Chinese subjects. The factory was apparently the first to adopt designs based on the very original grotesques of Jean Bérain I (1637–1711), one of the leading *ornemanistes* in the later years of the reign of Louis XIV (fig. 20).

At Saint-Jean-du-Désert painting was rather different — exact and controlled, within a fine outline made with the use of *poncis*. There is strong evidence of influence from Nevers in the often elaborate shapes; the use of figural compositions, both oriental and European, within panels; and a fondness for elegantly drawn figures



21. Dish: *Glaucus calls to Scylla from the sea*.
Marseilles, ca. 1690–1700

from illustrations by Daniel Rabel for romances, such as *L'Astrée* by Honoré d'Urfé and *Aminta* by Torquato Tasso. Nonfigural ornaments copied from engraved design sheets by Daniel Marot (1663–1752) were often interspersed with landscape, Chinese, or other subjects or provided their enframements. Molded acanthus-leaf borders in the manner of silverwork were used for large display dishes (fig. 21). Both the Moustiers and the Saint-Jean-du-Désert factories used the blue-and-white color scheme — the blue in several depths, as in Chinese imports. At Saint-Jean-du-Désert the outlines were in purple and occasionally there were also areas of purple wash.

AFTERWORD

By 1700 there were a number of faience factories in northern and southern France for which Paris, the capital, and Marseilles, the second city of France, provided the principal markets and artistic stimuli. In addition there were four porcelain ventures, one being the white-glass imitations of Massolay. Nevers was still productive and retained a warehouse in Paris. Individual potters from Rouen, Nevers, and Saint-Jean were by this time also operating new faience potteries in Nantes, Dijon, Quimper, Varages, and Lille, although they did not originate new designs or enjoy royal patronage. Utilitarian white wares with summary decoration in blue continued to be made at most of the old centers already in operation at the beginning of the century. At Avignon a unique pottery making distinctive, brilliantly glazed brown wares since the sixteenth century produced the only courtly earthenware, beautifully finished and glazed inside and under the foot, with shapes and decoration drawn from contemporary metalwork (fig. 22). In some regional potteries, such as those at Sorsus and Saint-Vérain, designs culled from contemporary faience were simplified and carried out in traditional techniques.

A new impetus to the manufacture of faience came in 1709, when the aged king, who thirty years earlier had sent the great silver appointments of Versailles to the melting pot to pay for his Flemish wars, now ordered the nobility to follow suit with their table silver to pay for the War of the Spanish Succession. Saint-Simon remarks in his *Mémoires* that within a week “anyone who was anyone had replaced his tablewares with faience.”

The faience factories in Rouen and elsewhere received orders for tablewares complete with the coats of arms of the clients (fig. 23). These potteries turned to printed ornament sheets that had heretofore inspired goldsmiths and silversmiths. Figure scenes, landscapes, and flower and leaf decoration derived from direct observation of oriental ceramics had not penetrated the decorative schemes of the classical architects and *ornemanistes* who had in the greater arts, including silver, ruled over taste in the later years of the seventeenth century. Oriental themes, however, had been normal for faience decoration for many decades. Thus it is not unusual to find purely ornamental border decoration combining oriental and classical motifs on Rouen and other faience. At Rouen the *style rayonnant* was developed, in which this composite decoration was marshaled into bands stretching from the edge or rim of a dish toward the center (fig. 24). In this rather indirect and late manner the scrupulously classical style of Louis XIV’s later reign was communicated to pottery.

Naturally this new, large, and discriminating market required faience that would be an acceptable replacement for silver both in variety and specificity of shapes (figs. 25 and 26) and in formality and refinement of execution.

In France the seventeenth century was one of continuous progress in ceramic art. There were important refinements of techniques and materials, culminating in the development of soft-paste porcelain. The best wares produced by the factories discussed here reflected the changing artistic styles developed in the capital — from the Mannerism of the early seventeenth century, through the exuberance of the Baroque, to the lighter but still classical style of the end of Louis XIV’s reign.



22. *Flagon* (right). Avignon, second half of
seventeenth century. *Rosewater ewer* (left).
Avignon, second half of seventeenth century



23. Salad plate. Rouen, ca. 1710



24. *Plate*. Rouen, ca. 1710–15



25. *Fluted wine cooler*. Rouen, ca. 1700–1710



26. *Ecritoire*. Rouen, ca. 1700–1715

Cover: **Sconce: Page holding a torch socket.** Lead-glazed white earthenware. H. 16¾ in. (42.5 cm.)

Probably Normandy, ca. 1660–80 or later; model ca. 1610, Fontainebleau
Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917

17.190.2059

This sconce was probably one of a set of six or eight, with alternating male and female figures, used to light a small room. The page's dress dates from the first decade of the seventeenth century.

1. **"Gondola" cup with figure personifying a spring.** Lead-glazed white earthenware (*terre sigillée*).

L. 8 in. (20.3 cm.)

Fontainebleau, ca. 1620–25, probably made in the pottery of Claude Bertélemy (ca. 1555–1626); model ca. 1600–1610 probably by Guillaume Dupré (1575–1643)

Gift of Julia A. Berwind, 1953

53.225.54

In the first decades of the seventeenth century "gondola" cups were also made in silver, silver gilt, amber, crystal, enamel, and natural shell.

Guillaume Dupré was a sculptor, medalist, and lapidary. He was named first sculptor to Henry IV in 1597 and later controller in chief of the dies and designs of the mints of France. In spite of his Protestant faith he remained in court favor. He is considered one of the greatest of French medalists and sculptors and one of the last representatives of the French Renaissance.

2. **Dish: Andromeda rescued by Perseus.** Lead-glazed white earthenware (*terre sigillée*).

Diam. 9⅞ in. (25.1 cm.)

Probably Normandy, late seventeenth century; model ca. 1600, Fontainebleau, possibly by Giovanni Paolo (active ca. 1598–1612)

Gift of Julia A. Berwind, 1953

53.225.41

The theme of Perseus rescuing Andromeda was an allusion to Henry IV (Perseus) rescuing France (Andromeda) from the pro-Spanish Holy League (the dragon). It was used in several versions as an allegory for Henry IV's national policies.

Giovanni Paolo was a medalist and portraitist in colored wax, active in

Paris in the reigns of Henry IV and Louis XIII. This example is without the border of ovals in mottled jasper glaze of the original model.

3. **Henry IV as Neptune with an infant dolphin.** Lead-glazed white earthenware. H. 10⅜ in. (26.4 cm.)
Fontainebleau, ca. 1601–1602, probably from a model by Guillaume Dupré (1575–1643)

Gift of Mrs. Francis P. Garvan, 1966
66.236

This figure celebrates allegorically the birth of the dauphin, eldest son of Henry IV and Marie de Médicis. He was born at Fontainebleau in August 1601 and succeeded his father in 1610 as Louis XIII.

Other royal portraits made at the Fontainebleau pottery are those of Henry IV and his family; a bust of Henry IV; an equestrian figure of Louis XIII; and plaques with profile busts of Henry IV and Marie de Médicis and two of Louis XIII.

4. **Dish: Diana and the stag.** Lead-glazed white earthenware (*terre sigillée*).
Diam. 19¾ in. (50.2 cm.)

Fontainebleau, ca. 1620–25, probably made in the pottery of Claude Bertélemy (ca. 1555–1626); model ca. 1610

Bequest of R. Thornton Wilson, in memory of his wife, Florence Ellsworth Wilson, 1977

1977.216.4

The figure composition is in the manner of the second school of Fontainebleau. The oval marbled wells represent in miniature the use of marble plaques in architectural interiors, chimneypieces, and tabletops.

From the reign of Francis I (1515–47) through that of Louis XIII (1610–43), the goddess Diana was the most frequently represented classical deity in French painting and sculpture. The most celebrated Diana was the sculpture by Benvenuto Cellini at Fontainebleau.

5. **Nurse with baby in swaddling bands.** Lead-glazed white earthenware. H. 9 in. (22.9 cm.)
Manerbe, ca. 1670; model ca. 1602–1605, Fontainebleau, possibly by Guillaume Dupré (1575–1643)
The Lesley and Emma Sheaffer Collection, Bequest of Emma A. Sheaffer, 1973
1974.356.303
The dauphin's brother had an example of this group in 1608. The dauphin himself owned a large collection of Fontainebleau figures and animals bought on his frequent visits to the pottery. This is not as well finished as the earliest use of the model for the court would have required. *La Nourrice* was popular through the seventeenth century and was copied in Chelsea porcelain in the eighteenth.
Other Fontainebleau figures depicting ordinary or country people were a bagpiper, a hurdy-gurdy player, a youth with puppies, and a shepherd.
6. **Pharmacy jar for a drug in liquid form (cover missing).** Polychrome faience. H. 10¹/₈ in. (25.7 cm.)
Montpellier, ca. 1600, probably made in the workshop of Jean Estève (flourished 1590–1607), son-in-law of Antoine Sygalon (1524–90), a noted Protestant faïencier of Nîmes
Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917
17.190.1806
The segmented gourd shape is new but the decoration, painted with foliage in reserves on bands of green, orange, and blue, recalls the Faenza paneled pattern called “a quartiere” of the 1540s.
7. **Plate: Joseph's coat of many colors shown to Jacob.** Polychrome faience. Diam. 10⁷/₈ in. (27.6 cm.)
French, probably Nevers, ca. 1600–1620
Gift of Mrs. Francis P. Garvan, 1974
1974.286
The scene is based on the woodcut by Bernard Salomon (1508–1561) for the Lyons Bible published in French in 1553 by Jean de Tournes.
8. **Plate.** Polychrome faience. Diam. 9³/₄ in. (24.8 cm.)
Nevers, inscribed underneath
“May 1644”
Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917
17.190.1801
- This plate is probably from a set of twelve illustrating the months.
The wide, flat rim is typical of contemporary silver plates. The broad border is ornamented with grotesques.
9. **Bowl.** Faience, painted in blue, yellow, and brown with purple outline. Diam. 9¹/₄ in. (23.5 cm.)
Nevers, ca. 1630–40
Bequest of Mary Mandeville Johnston, 1914
14.102.354
The exterior wall has relief decoration of masks and shells. The figure of a cherub is in the summary (*a compendiaro*) taste of later sixteenth-century Italian wares.
10. **Dish with the arms of Poirel de Granval.** Faience, painted in blue. Diam. 9⁵/₈ in. (24.4 cm.)
Nevers, ca. 1650
Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917
17.190.1779
The figures are from Daniel Rabel's illustrations for *L'Astrée* by Honoré d'Urfé. The arms are those of Nicolas Poirel, sieur de Granval, who obtained a fifty-year monopoly in 1644 to make faience in Normandy. His rights of monopoly were exercised by Edmé Poterat of Rouen, who obtained painters from Nevers to help establish production.
11. **Plate with the arms of the Aligre family.** Faience, painted in blue. Diam. 9³/₈ in. (23.8 cm.)
Rouen, ca. 1650–60
Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917
17.190.1788
The figures are from Daniel Rabel's illustrations for *L'Astrée* by Honoré d'Urfé, and the scattered insects, birds, flowers, rabbits, and shrubs are in the free, broad-brush majolica style of Savona. These two styles were combined in the Conrade workshop at Nevers and were taken to Rouen by Nevers painters.
Members of the Aligre family were large landowners in Rouen and the region surrounding the city.

12. **Ewer and plate.** Yellow- and blue-tinted faience. H. (ewer) 12¾ in. (32.4 cm.); diam. (plate) 9 in. (23 cm.) Nevers, ca. 1650–70
Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917
17.190.1796,1797
The yellow-tinted *bianco* was the rarest of all the Nevers wares. Its manufacture involved antimony, a poisonous element. Yellow wares were probably made in only one workshop. Blue grounds were used with yellow, brown-orange, and white decoration as here; they were also painted only in white with pastoral or oriental figure groups or were simply splattered with white enamel in a style called “à la bougie,” from its resemblance to splashes of candle wax.
13. **Pilgrim bottle.** Polychrome faience. H. 9¾ in. (24.8 cm.)
Nevers, ca. 1660–80
Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917
17.190.1803
This bottle is decorated with mixed flowers and plants, loosely grouped as though growing close together, and is painted mainly in green; the bands of yellow at foot and neck are painted with scrolls in deep blackish purple. Of Eastern origin, the design shows off the characteristic green of Nevers which was used as a monochrome coloring or, as here, with touches of purple and yellow.
14. **Ewer.** Polychrome faience. H. 22 in. (55.9 cm.)
Nevers, ca. 1675–85
Purchase, The Charles E. Sampson Memorial Fund, Gift of Irwin Untermyer, by exchange, Rogers Fund, and Bequest of John L. Cadwalader, by exchange, 1985
1985.181.1
This display ewer is one of a pair whose form is based on ornamental vases designed for the gardens of Versailles by the royal goldsmith Claude Ballin I (ca. 1615–78) in 1670. The coloring and purple outline are stronger than the normal palette used for European subjects (cf. fig. 15). Each ewer is decorated with a mythological scene. Here Mercury is seen beheading Argos.
15. **Pilgrim flask.** Polychrome faience. H. 14¼ in. (36.2 cm.)
Nevers, ca. 1675–85
Gift of Rev. Alfred Duane Pell, 1902
02.6.274
The main zone of decoration is painted within a shaped panel with the Race of Atalanta and Melanion, from an engraving in a 1667 edition of Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* by the court poet Isaac Benserade. The soft misty quality of the best Nevers polychrome painting is well exemplified here. It was partly due to the absence of a lead glaze over the *grand feu* painting. The available space on the flask required small alterations of the rectangular book illustration and the elimination of background figures.
16. **Jar for potpourri (cover missing).** Soft-paste porcelain with underglaze blue painting. H. 5 in. (12.7 cm.)
Rouen, factory of Louis Poterat I (1640?–1696), ca. 1690
Gift of R. Thornton Wilson, in memory of Florence Ellsworth Wilson, 1950
50.221.186
This piece is identical to a silver-mounted mustard pot in the Musée National de Céramique at Sèvres, which has the arms of Asselin de Villequier, a noted family of Rouen. The molded panels and rosettes are seen on contemporary silver, and the blue decoration, while using motifs drawn from oriental porcelain, is marshaled and disciplined within firm outlines, following indications for silversmiths’ work in engraved prints.
17. **Tile (from the tile cladding of a stove).** Faience, painted in blue. 13 x 13½ x 3 in. (33 x 34.3 x 7.6 cm.)
Saint-Cloud or Paris, ca. 1705
Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917
17.190.1948
The figure of a flutist is probably after an engraving by Jean-Baptiste Bonnart (1678–1726) or Nicolas Bonnart (1636–1718). Some eight similar tiles are known, each with a musician playing a different instrument. They are probably from a stove commissioned for a music room.

18. **Ewer.** Faience, painted in blue.
H. 11 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (28.3 cm.)
Moustiers, ca. 1690–1700
Bequest of Ella Morris de Peyster, 1957
58.60.14
The entire form of this work—body, handle, foot, and raised band and straps on the body—is the same as that of silver ewers of 1690–1700.
19. **Dish: An ostrich hunt.** Faience, painted in blue. Diam. 22 $\frac{1}{8}$ in. (56.2 cm.)
Moustiers, ca. 1690
Painted by Gaspard Viry (1668–1720) or one of his followers
Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917
17.190.1822
This scene is after an engraving of 1598 from a set of *Hunts* by Antonio Tempesta (1555–1630).
Huge dishes such as this followed, in the precarious medium of pottery, the taste for large display pieces evident in the reign of Louis XIV. The luminous quality unique to Moustiers faience can be appreciated in this dish.
20. **Tray.** Faience, painted in blue.
L. 12 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (31.8 cm.)
Moustiers, ca. 1700–1710
Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917
17.190.1885
The form of this tray is based on imported oriental lacquer models. The decoration of grotesques is after a design by Jean Bérain II (1678–1726). Adopted as early as 1696 for a marriage dish for Anne-Hypolithe de Grimaldi, a princess of Monaco, grotesques were a favorite pattern in use at Moustiers for some forty years.
21. **Dish: Glaucus calls to Scylla from the sea.** Faience, painted in blue.
Diam. 20 in. (50.8 cm.)
Marseilles, Saint-Jean-du-Désert factory, ca. 1690–1700
Gift of R. Thornton Wilson, in memory of Florence Ellsworth Wilson, 1950
50.211.76
This dish is painted with the story of Glaucus and Scylla from Ovid's *Metamorphoses* after the engraving by Bernard Salomon (1508–1561) for the edition published in Lyons by Jean de Tournes in 1557. Glaucus, a fisherman turned into a sea god by Ocean and Thetys, possessed a half-human–half-fish form. His love for the nymph Scylla was not returned.
The large size and bold acanthus-leaf border in relief are based on contemporary styles for silver; the narrow blue border is, however, derived from oriental porcelain, while the monochrome painting is based on a French Renaissance design.
22. **Flagon** (right). Lead-glazed earthenware. H. 14 $\frac{1}{4}$ in. (36.2 cm.)
Avignon, second half of seventeenth century
Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917
17.190.1756

Rosewater ewer (left). Lead-glazed earthenware. H. 11 $\frac{1}{2}$ in. (29.2 cm.)
Avignon, second half of seventeenth century
Gift of G. J. Demotte, 1923
23.201
The cover is attached to the body, and the ewer is filled through a hole in the bottom.
23. **Salad plate.** Faience, painted in blue.
Diam. 9 in. (22.9 cm.)
Rouen, ca. 1700–1710
Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917
17.190.1780
The center armorial quarters the arms of the Abbey of St. Wandrille with those of Balthazar Henri de Fourcy, its abbot commendatory from 1690 to 1754. The border decoration is of a type called “*broderie*”—here clusters of fruit and leaves in white against a blue ground.

24. **Plate.** Faience, painted in blue and red.
Diam. 9½ in. (24.1 cm.)
Rouen, ca. 1710–15
Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917
17.190.1767

The decoration of this plate is called “*rayonnant*.” This form of ornament marshals the decorative motifs in narrow arrangements which are then placed radially around the dish. A huge variety of decorative shapes could be drawn upon, but a feature of the style is the combination of both Japanese and Chinese ornaments familiar from imported porcelains and lacquers. The formalization of these into a geometric scheme is due to the influence of architectural *ornemanistes* of the later

25. **Fluted wine cooler.** Faience, painted in blue and red. H. 6½ in. (16.5 cm.)
Rouen, probably the factory of Michel Poterat (1650–1721), ca. 1700–1710
Gift of J. Pierpont Morgan, 1917
17.190.1858

A bright but not transparent tomato-red color was introduced at Rouen in the last decade of the seventeenth century. It was not derived from a metal oxide like other faience colors but was a very fine red clay, or bole. The blue-and-red decoration of

Rouen, influenced by Japanese blue-and-red Imari porcelain, remained its specialty.

After the introduction of corks for bottles, large wine coolers capable of taking several flagons were gradually abandoned in favor of small buckets like this for cooling single bottles. Vertical fluting was typical of contemporary silver, while the painted decoration of trellis panels, flower swags, and oriental flowers shows the usual conflation of European and Eastern motifs.

26. **Ecritoire.** Faience, painted in blue and mustard yellow. L. 15¼ in. (38.7 cm.)

Rouen, ca. 1700–1715

Museum Accession

x.181.a–j

This writing set includes pen trays, wafer boxes, sanders, inkwells, candlesticks, and figures, of which the owls are the most speaking. The piper on the cover of a sandbox is the upper part of a school of Fontainebleau figure. Links between Rouen and the later school of Palissy active at Manerbe are not surprising as Rouen was the principal city in the neighborhood of Manerbe.

BIBLIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

French ceramic art of the seventeenth century is here treated as a discrete subject for the first time in English. *French Faience* by Arthur Lane (London, second edition, 1970) has a bibliography of works in French devoted to particular factories. *Faïences françaises: XVI–XVIII siècles* (Paris, 1980) is an extremely valuable exhibition catalogue; every item is illustrated, and there is a good bibliography and a list of all exhibitions on the subject since 1867. Also of interest are *La Céramique française* by M. J. Ballot (Paris, two volumes, 1924–25) and *L'Oeuvre des faïenciers français du XVIe à la fin du XVIIIe siècle* by Henry-Pierre Fourest and Jeanne Giacomotti (Paris, 1966).

